

Extremist Shiites

The Ghulat Sects



Matti Moosa


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To
Hans, Mark, Petra, and Jessica
With Love

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Sultan Sahak

Founder of the Ahl-i Haqq

SULTAN SAHAK, believed by the Ahl-i Haqq to be the fourth of seven incarnations of the deity, is perhaps their most prominent leader. He appears to be founder of the sect in its present form, as well as the reformer who revived its ancient law. It was he who instituted the covenant of Benyamin, regulated the different offices of his "angels," or associates, and organized the rituals of initiation and sacrifice. Indeed, many Ahl-i Haqq sayyids (leaders) trace their genealogy to his sons, the Haft-tavana. The prominent leader of the Kurds in Iraq, Shaykh Mahmud Barzani, who after World War I claimed to be the king of Kurdistan, traced his ancestry to the brother of Sultan Sahak.¹

Frédéric Macler maintains that the name Sahak is the current Armenian form of Isaac. It is in this Armenian form that the Kakaiyya of Iraq and the Ahl-i Haqq write the name. Macler also seems to identify Sultan Sahak with the ninth-century Sahak Mahout, nicknamed Apikourech, who caused much controversy because of his violence and is also remembered for his response to the letter of Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople (d. 892).² This identification is erroneous; as shall be seen later, Sultan Sahak appeared in the fourteenth century. Among other names which the Ahl-i Haqq use in their Armenian forms are Baus for Bohos (Paul), Benyamin for Benjamin, and Nuy for Noah.³ The use of these names in their Armenian form, together with some Armenian religious practices of the Ahl-i Haqq (to be discussed in detail in a later chapter), perhaps indicates the influence of Armenian Christianity on the Ahl-i Haqq and their religious beliefs.

According to Ivanow, Christianity had reached the confines of Kurdistan and penetrated Armenia by the end of the second century, long

before the conversion of that country to Christianity by St. Gregory the Illuminator. At this time, Christianity was infested with many heresies, especially that of Paul of Samosata, Patriarch of Antioch, who was condemned and deposed in A.D. 269 for teaching that Jesus was born a mere man, only later becoming God at His baptism, after the Holy Spirit descended upon Him. Paul taught, in other words, that Jesus was the Son of God by adoption. Ivanow maintains that the adherents of this and other similar heresies were persecuted in the ninth and tenth centuries by the Byzantine Church and state, which forced them to seek refuge in Muslim lands, where many of them converted to Islam. They mingled among the Muslims, carrying with them their heretical views, and thus influencing the beliefs of such sects as the Ahl-i Haqq. Many of the Paulicians (followers of Paul of Samosata) were Armenians whose heretical beliefs survive in an Armenian book called *The Key of Truth*. This book discovered in manuscript form, was translated into English with invaluable comments and an introduction by F. C. Conybeare, and published by Oxford in 1898. Ivanow attempts to show the influence on the dogma of the Ahl-i Haqq of the teachings embodied in *The Key of Truth*, particularly those regarding the incarnation of God in human form, a concept totally alien to Islam.⁴ This idea applies directly to Sultan Sahak, believed by the Ahl-i Haqq to be an incarnation of the Deity, belief that, together with their use of the Armenian name Sahak, suggests the heretical Armenian influence on the Ahl-i Haqq. We shall elaborate this subject in chapter 38.

Sultan Sahak apparently appeared in the Armenian mountains in western Iran in the first half of the fourteenth century. Sahak was a Kurd, and a dervish pir—not one of the wandering mendicant dervishes, but rather a settled dervish who was also known as the pir of Perdivar and Shahu, two villages on the river Servan (Diyala), a tributary of the Tigris River. To the Ahl-i Haqq, Perdivar is a sacred shrine, as Mecca is to the Muslims. It is here that Shah Kushin probably appeared as a manifestation of the Deity, and that the *Saranjam*, believed to have been written by Benyamin, was revealed. It was also at Perdivar that the sultan was able to win the allegiance of the notorious Pir Mikhail by performing miracles. Sultan Sahak is buried near the village of Shaykhan on the river Servan (Diyala), not far from Perdivar. Minorsky, who visited the site in 1914, gives a vividly description of the location of the sanctuary and some of the rituals associated with it.⁵

An episode about Sultan Sahak which I have not found in any other source is related by Adjarian. He states that the Thoumaris, a subgroup of the Ahl-i Haqq, believe that Sultan Sahak is a prophet who was sent to

announce the advent of the god Sim, but that Sim did not appear. Sahak was followed by Kuşcuoğlu (son of a bird-seller), a Turkish poet who also announced the advent of Sim, who finally did appear in human form, being born in Tabriz in the first half of the nineteenth century.⁶

Sultan Sahak came from a well-known line of Barzanja Kurdish Shaykhs. His father was Shaykh Isa, and his mother was Khatun Dayerah, daughter of Hasan Beg of the famous Jaf Kurdish tribe.⁷ According to Ahl-i Haqq mythology, his birth was miraculous, and he appeared in the form of a divine falcon.⁸

As a chief dervish, Sultan Sahak had many followers (twelve thousand in Hawraman alone), of whom he chose four as his close associates to carry out his religious instructions and authority. These were the four "angels," Benyamin, Pir Musi, Dawud, and Razbar. Although according to the Ahl-i Haqq creation myth these "angels" were created during the first manifestation of the Deity, Khavandagar, in a historical sense they belong to the era of Sultan Sahak, who chose them as his lieutenants from among his dervishes. Since the *Saranjam*, consisting mainly of poems by Sultan Sahak incorporating the doctrines of the Ahl-i Haqq, was "revealed" (that is, written down) by Benyamin at Perdivar, it is not unlikely that the compiler of the *Saranjam* concocted the myth of the seven theophanies of God and made the four associates of Sultan Sahak "divinely created beings" in order to offer the new pir of the Ahl-i Haqq unchallenged authority over the community.⁹

It was Sultan Sahak who appointed these functionaries to their offices. Benyamin became the Pir-i Shart (one who received the covenant, or the vicar of Sultan Sahak in religious matters). Dawud became an instructor, and Pir Musi an administrator and bookkeeper. Sultan Sahak instructed his followers to obey the orders of these associates and to follow the principles laid down by them.¹⁰

It was at Perdivar that the principles of haqiqat (Truth), which constitute the religious and moral order of the Ahl-i Haqq, were instituted. When Sultan Sahak told his four angels to lay down the principles of haqiqat (Truth), Benyamin asked on what foundation they should be based. Sultan Sahak said that one must know that the principle of haqiqat is the omniscient and omnipresent God, and that the rules of behavior are based on the fear of God.¹¹

This haqiqat requires the highest ethical conduct by the Ahl-i Haqq. Every member of the community is expected to learn how to control his senses and check his lusts. Those who subjugate the senses to their will realize that the Truth is manifested in their actions. It is also imperative that the members of the community recognize the omnipre-

sence of the lord of the world: that is, Sultan Sahak.¹² What this means (as shall be seen later) is that the recognition of the leader of the community is a religious requirement.

In Shiism, knowing the Imam is like knowing God Himself, and a Shiite who dies without knowing the Imam of his time dies an infidel.¹³ Members of the Ahl-i Haqq community must, in addition, distinguish between what is lawful and what is unlawful. They should not wrong one another, and they should be content with what God has given them. They should not stretch out their hands to beg. They should be sober and patient, neither given to worrying, nor causing others to worry. Sultan Sahak said that anyone following these rules became his son and whosever recognizes his own position has in fact recognized the Truth.

After Sahak uttered these principles of haqiqat (Truth), Benyamin suggested to him that a covenant be concluded that whosoever observes these principles in truthfulness and sincerity will triumph at the end, becoming a perfect follower of the order. Those who follow the principles blindly, however, obeying them not in spirit but as rigid rituals, will forever be rejected.

Responding to this suggestion, Sultan Sahak explained that these principles, like the Miraj (night journey) of the Prophet Muhammad, are an unfathomable mystery, not to be revealed to the ignorant. He also cited his poems, which were revealed to him as an unutterable mystery, as being beyond the comprehension of the ignorant. This is the first time we encounter Sultan Sahak's claim to prophecy and his equation of his own revealed words as a supernatural phenomenon comparable with the Miraj of the Prophet of Islam. Sultan Sahak is also called, in this context, the Qutb (pole, or center), the highest position in the Sufi hierarchy. This may indicate that in the time of Sultan Sahak, the Ahl-i Haqq community had developed into a Sufi order of dervishes in Iran, similar to the Safawi order.

A story in the *Tadhkira* sheds an interesting light on this development. The story asserts that Shaykh Safi al-Din (d. 1334), from whom the Safawi Dynasty in Iran derives its name, sought investiture by Sultan Sahak. Shaykh Ibrahim (d. 1301), known as the Zahid of Gilan, the religious guide of Safi al-Din, sent the latter to Perdivar to be invested by Sultan Sahak as a Sufi murshid. With Safi al-Din, the Zahid of Gilan sent a fried fish in a basket. Sultan Sahak received the fish and ordered a ring brought to him; he placed it in the mouth of the fish and then threw the fish into a water tank. Miraculously, the fish came back to life and reappeared in the water tank of Zahid of Gilan.¹⁴ The compiler of the *Tadhkira* attempted to show by this miracle that Sultan Sahak was no

ordinary dervish or shaykh, but a spiritual guide endowed with divine attributes. It was also probably meant to impress Zahid of Gilan, who was renowned for his ascetic life. As a gesture of respect, Safi al-Din was admitted to the religious assembly, greatly venerated by the Ahl-i Haqq as the center of their worship. But when Safi al-Din saw women mingling with men at the assembly, he condemned this practice as indecent.

When Sultan Sahak learned that Safi al-Din had condemned worship by men and women together at the religious assembly, he sent Safi al-Din back without investiture. With him, however, he sent gifts: a bottle of water, fire, and a piece of cotton, all in their natural state without being affected by each other. The water did not extinguish the flame, and the flame did not consume the piece of cotton. By this supernatural phenomenon, Sultan Sahak was trying to prove to Safi al-Din and his instructor, Zahid of Gilan, that the congregation of men and women at the assembly was not immoral. Zahid of Gilan seemed convinced by the demonstration, and he sent Safi al-Din back to Sultan Sahak, who, through the intercession of Benyamin, invested Safi al-Din with the office of an independent Sufi guide.¹⁵

Whether real or contrived, this episode indicates that at the beginning of the fourteenth century, the Ahl-i Haqq community was a Sufi order of dervishes, probably lacking extremist Shiite tendencies.¹⁶ In fact, we do not know whether Sultan Sahak was a Shiite. Certainly there is no concrete evidence that Shaykh Safi al-Din was a Shiite; otherwise, he would have sought investiture from a Shiite mujtahid.¹⁷

Meanwhile, Shiism had advanced into the Caspian provinces of Iran, including Ardabil, the hometown of Shaykh Safi al-Din, and the Hawraman district of north-western Iran, the home of the Ahl-i Haqq.

By the beginning of the sixteenth century, Shiism under Shah Isma'il had triumphed in Iran, and many dervish orders, including the Qadiris, Rifais and Naqshbandis, had disappeared. It was then that those dervishes or qalandars associated with Shiism were called Haydaris, or Jalalis, or Khaksar. Although it is not certain whether the Haydaris formed a monastic order in Iran, as did the Bektashis in Asia Minor, Ivanow states that "their close connection with Ahl-i Haqq is undeniable."¹⁸

We may assume, then, based on the available religious literature and traditions of the Ahl-i Haqq, that they were a community of dervishes like the Bektashis, closely associated with Shiism. Indeed, one tradition of the Ahl-i Haqq makes Sultan Sahak the originator of the Bektashi order of dervishes. According to this tradition, related by Saeed Khan,

after Sultan Sahak organized the affairs of his own community, laying down rules and doctrines, and confirming the believers in the faith, he vanished, reappearing under the name of Haji Bektash, in Asia Minor, where he founded the Bektashi order in Turkey.¹⁹ Curiously, this same tradition is also related of Muhammad Beg, the sixth incarnation of the Deity and the son of the fifth incarnation, Qirmizi. Many years after his manifestation, Muhammad Beg instructed his community to remain steadfast in the faith and set off for the land of the Rum (i.e., Turkey "Ala Kapi" or the Sublime Porte, the nineteenth-century designation for the seat of the Ottoman sultan), a journey his father had wanted to make but did not. Muhammad Beg remarried in Turkey several years after assuming the name of Haji Bektash.²⁰ Although this tradition is unsubstantiated, it offers some latitude for speculation that there has been communication between the Ahl-i Haqq and the Bektashis. Like the rest of the Ghulat, both are associated with the cult of Ali.²¹

Perhaps the real reason for the inclusion in the *Tadhkira* of the episode of Shaykh Safi al-Din's investiture by Sultan Sahak was to establish a legitimate "ecclesiastical" authority for the Safawis, whose ancestor, Safi al-Din, had founded a Sufi order and had drawn a great following. This episode gains greater significance when we realize that Safi al-Din was considered by the Turkomans to be their spiritual leader, even serving as an arbiter of disputes among the Turkoman villagers.²²

Another interesting episode showing the connections between the Safawis and the Ahl-i Haqq appears in an addition to the *Tadhkira*. This episode links the genealogy of the Safawis with the Imam Ali. It states that Sayyid Shihab al-Din, who was buried in Qaradagh in Ahar, a town on the Rum-Persian border in Azerbaijan, was the grandfather of Sayyid Jabrail, in turn the grandfather of Shaykh Safi al-Din, the ancestor of Shah Ismail, who was "the substance of Ali Qalandar," that is, the Imam Ali. This episode ends with the revealing statement that Ardabil (headquarters of the Safawi order), is the fountain of haqiqat. Although the genealogy of the Safawis does not mention a Sayyid Shihab al-Din, this statement indicates an intention to associate the Safawis with the Ahl-i Haqq.

A prominent feature of the religious system of the Ahl-i Haqq is the covenant of Benyamin. It is so firmly associated with the principle of the haqiqat, the religious assembly, and the position of the ujaqs (sayyids), that it is synonymous with the Ahl-i Haqq.²³ The genesis of this covenant is confusing. In the book of *Saranjam*, or *Tadhkira-i A'la*, it appears for the first time in association with the myth of the creation. It was then

that God in the first manifestation created from His divine light the Ahl al-Aba (family of the Prophet) together with the four angels, including Benjamin, the founder of the covenant.²⁴

After he created the four angels, God in his first incarnation instituted the covenant of the spiritual guide. (Benjamin also appears as the reincarnation of the angel Gabriel, with whom God entered into that covenant.) God warned Benjamin that if he became the pir or leader of the community, he would be unable to carry out God's orders because he would lack God's authority. However, if God in his human form, as the divine leader of the community, became the disciple and Benjamin became his pir (leader or chief), then Benjamin could implement the instructions of the pir.²⁵ This proposal to reverse the positions of the pir, who guides, and the disciple, who obeys, seems paradoxical. But the paradox is explained by the fact that when the pir becomes a disciple, he retains his divine power, and thus can still carry out the orders of his disciple, who has assumed the position of pir, but, being a creature without authority, cannot carry out the orders of the Deity.²⁶

Minorsky attempts to rationalize this paradox by stating that the covenant of Benjamin probably symbolizes the rite of "delivery, or dedicating the head" of every member of the Ahl-i Haqq to his pir at the ceremony of initiation into the community. It is an act of submission to the pir, found in almost all the sects discussed so far. Minorsky also sees traces of Ismailism in the covenant of Benjamin. He states that among the Ahl-i Haqq, the Deity assumed the same position as the *natiq* (proclaimer or prophetic Imam) of the Ismailis. In Ismailism, God acted as the minister of the *natiq*, who represents the universal truth. It is possible, says Minorsky, that the covenant of Benjamin with the Deity is an echo of this Ismaili theory.²⁷

Saeed Khan seems to share Minorsky's opinion on this point. He states that having a pir with whom the member of Ahl-i Haqq identifies himself is so momentous that even the Sultan Sahak set an example by choosing Benjamin as his pir, in imitation of Christ's request to be baptized by John the Baptist.²⁸

This may be so, but in order to fully understand the significance of the covenant of Benjamin, we must turn to the *Saranjam*, or *Tadhkira*, which sheds great light on this covenant and the circumstances that necessitated its institution.

We have already seen that the covenant of Benjamin was instituted by Sultan Sahak in connection with the laying down of the principle of haqiqat (Truth). The belief that the covenant was formed at the time of the creation endows the religion of the Ahl-i Haqq with divine origin and

timelessness. Its initiation by Sultan Sahak demonstrates his divine authority, gives him a legitimate spiritual descent as one of the seven incarnations of God, and establishes him as a perceptive teacher of the haqiqat, who could condescend to accept the position of murid, while retaining the spiritual authority of a pir.

It seems that the power struggle between Sultan Sahak and his dervishes became so heated that the sultan disappeared, refusing to reappear until he had instituted the covenant of Benyamin, which demanded the obedience of his followers. The compiler of the *Saranjam* or *Tadhkira* relates this whole affair as yet another incident in the Ahl-i Haqq mythology, giving the following account:

Sultan Sahak disappeared from the land and went to live at the bottom of the sea, in order to converse with the inhabitants of the sea under the Saj-i Nar (fiery pan). The dervishes, possibly fearing an insurrection by the people who were waiting for the return of their spiritual leader, sent emissaries to Sultan Sahak, asking him to return to his people. One of these emissaries, Pir Ali, was undoubtedly a prominent member of the Ahl-i Haqq community. The sultan refused to return. Finally, Benyamin cast himself into the sea and found the sultan conversing with the sea-dwellers. At first Benyamin could not get near the sultan, being kept back by the heat of the fiery pan. But after great effort, he managed to reach him and implored him to return to his followers.

Sultan Sahak told Benyamin that he felt great indignation toward his followers because they were disobedient, treacherous, and not confirmed in faithfulness. Benyamin kept imploring the sultan to forgive his followers their sins, and fulfill his promise to return. Finally, Sultan Sahak agreed to return to his people on the condition that Benyamin become his pir, while he became Benyamin's follower.

Benyamin thought that such a deception was a strange proposition. But the sultan explained that followers must accept the authority of the pir and obey his every command. If Sultan Sahak became the pir and Benyamin his follower, Benyamin would not be able to carry out the sultan's commands. But if Benyamin became the pir, and Sultan Sahak the follower, whatever the pir ordered, the follower would be obliged to do. Only if Benyamin agreed to this proposition, the sultan said, would he return to his people.²⁹

This mythological account gives the impression that the covenant of Benyamin with its paradoxical reversal of the roles of the Pir and the murid, was a stratagem devised by Sultan Sahak to pacify the recalcitrant dervishes, not by surrendering his authority, but by condescending to share it with them while keeping final decisions on morals and religious

matters in the community as his prerogative. Ivanow believes, however, that it is possible that the dervishes, led by Pir Benyamin, took real control and managed the affairs of the community, while Sultan Sahak became a mere puppet in their hands.³⁰

From this point on, the covenant became the golden rule for the Ahl-i Haqq community. It was invoked whenever the pir had trouble with his dervishes or members of his family, and whenever the religious and moral rules of the community were violated. Its efficacy was shown when Sultan Sahak had trouble with a half-brother over the inheritance left by his father.

To exact the inheritance from Sultan Sahak, the half-brother sought the assistance of a certain Chichak, who may have been the headman of a village by the same name, near Lake Urmia. Chichak marshaled his tribe against Sultan Sahak, who hid himself in a cave. To survive the ordeal, Sultan Sahak resorted to magic. He sent one of his lieutenants, Dawud, to throw a handful of dust on Chichak's men, causing them to panic and disperse in confusion. The magic used was the invocation of Benyamin's covenant, the golden pen of Pir Musi, and the pure service of Razbar.³¹

This use of magic against an enemy recalls similar stories told about modern Iranian soldiers, who are reported to have thrown dust at the tanks of their Iraqi enemies to make them disappear.³² This story perhaps demonstrates the tribal opposition to the authority of Sultan Sahak and his struggle for survival.³³ Be that as it may, the covenant of Benyamin became the rule by which the community was expected to abide.

The covenant of Benyamin was also invoked during the time of Qirmizi, the fifth incarnation of the Deity, when the question arose as to whether the Ahl-i Haqq should fast or not. Qirmizi told them that they should fast and remain faithful to the covenant of Benyamin, that is, the rules of the religion of Ahl-i Haqq.³⁴

During the time of the sixth incarnation of the Deity, Muhammad Beg, the covenant of Benyamin was cited as being synonymous with the religion of Ahl-i Haqq: "He who has no faith in this world of unutterable mystery is alien to the Shart of Benyamin," that is, the Ahl-i Haqq community.³⁵

The seventh and last incarnation of the Deity was Khan Atish, who lived in the late seventeenth century. Khan Atish reportedly refused to pray during the celebration of the communal meal after some celebrants poured cooked food into a basin from a cauldron. Khan Atish rejected the food as unlawful because, he said, the cauldron had been stolen. He therefore refused to say the prayer from the covenant of Benyamin that is customarily recited over food.³⁶

So important is Benyamin to the religion of Ahl-i Haqq that he is called Pir-i amin and Murshid-i amin (faithful pir or spiritual guide). He is, as Sultan Sahak said, "the king of my people," whom he has accepted as their pir.³⁷

Ivanow sees a parallel between Benyamin and Srosho, the principal associate of Mithra. Srosho is identified as the chief of police, the head spy, and Mithra's ear. These functions may mean, in a religious context, that Srosho was the faithful and trusted confidant of Mithra who conveyed to his lord the prayers of suffering humanity. In this sense, Benyamin, who is also the incarnation of the angel Gabriel, is called the "faithful reporter."³⁸

Ivanow presents another parallel between Srosho and Benyamin which he says is not entirely fortuitous. In Mithraism, Srosho is called *dena-dish*, or *daena dish*, meaning "instructor in religion," or spiritual guide. This, Ivanow asserts, is "strikingly reminiscent of Benyamin, after whom the Ahl-i Haqq religion is called Shart-i Benyamin, and who appears as Pir-i Shart, a spiritual master of the covenant."³⁹

Benyamin is more than a faithful and trusted spiritual guide to the Ahl-i Haqq. He is the *Ben* (son) of Yah, and the *amin* (faithful). We have already seen in chapter 17 that Benyamin is considered to be the essence of God, the one for whom God created everything, and on whom everything depends. Briefly, then, he is to the religion of the Ahl-i Haqq what Christ is to Christianity. A prominent Ali Ilahi (Ahl-i Haqq) religious leader, greatly revered by his people as a prophet, told the missionary F M. Stead that Benyamin, whom his people worship, is only another name for Christ.⁴⁰

Saeed Khan has produced tristichs composed by Nur Ali Shah (the son of Shah [Haji] Nimat Allah, who partly wrote *Furqan al-Akhbar*), revealing his beliefs about Benyamin. To Nur Ali Shah, the Truth is homologous with Benyamin, who is no other than Christ and the Holy Spirit. This is very close to saying that Benyamin, Christ, and the Holy Spirit form a trinity, the first trinity encountered among the Ahl-i Haqq. More significantly, this Ahl-i Haqq poet associates the commandments of Christ with Benyamin and his covenant, and concludes by stating that only through the law of Christ can one know the truth. It is not certain how much Nur Ali Shah knew about the Gospel, but he must have either known or read of it, as his words, "Jesus, whose net is the Gospel," attest.⁴¹

75. Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 23.
76. Khurshid Efendi, *Siyahat Nama Hudud*, in Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 23.
77. Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 23. Cf. *Shah Nama-ye Haqiqat*, 1:521–23, 526–27.
78. Loftus, *Travels and Research in Chaldea and Susiana*, 386.
79. Stead, "The Ali Ilahi Sect," 186–87.
80. S. G. Wilson, *Persian Life and Customs*, 234–35.
81. Stead, "The Ali Ilahi Sect," 188–89. Khan, "The Sect of Ahl-i Haqq (Ali Ilahis)," 34.
34. Cf. *Shah Nama-ye Haqiqat*, 1:422–23 and 8 of the Introduction.
82. Khan, "The Sect of Ahl-i Haqq (Ali Ilahis)," 34.
83. Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 53.
84. Stead, "The Ali Ilahi Sect," 188; and Petrushevsky, *Islam in Iran*, 263, where the author states that the Ahl-i Haqq considered Shah Ismail, founder of the Safawi dynasty, an incarnation of God. Cf. *Shah Nama-ye Haqiqat*, 1:526–267 and 533–57 on Shah Hayyas.
85. See Saranjam, trans. Pittman, in "The Final Word of the Ahl-i Haqq," 148–49; *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 111; and *Shah Nama-ye Haqiqat*, 1:273–97 and 301–3.
86. Saranjam, trans. Pittman, in "The Final Word of the Ahl-i Haqq," 159–60; *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 121; and *Shah Nama-ye Haqiqat*, 1:317–43.
87. *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 134 (Ivanow gives the name as Shah Ways-Quli); and Saranjam, trans. Pittman, in "Final Word of the Ahl-i Haqq," where this episode is too brief and only contains the name of Qirmizi as Shah Vali-Quli.
88. *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 143.
89. *Ibid.*, 115 and 120–22.
90. V. A. Joukovsky, *People of the Truth*, in Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 76.
91. Saranjam, trans. Pittman, in "The Final Word of the Ahl-i Haqq," 151; and *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 111–12. Shakkak Ahmad does not appear in Minorsky's list as one of the Four angels of Shah Kushin. See Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 11; and *idem*, "Ahl-i Hakk," 1:260.
92. H. C. Rawlinson, "Notes on a March from Zohab," 110.
93. Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 22; Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 112 n.26; Rawlinson, "Notes on a March from Zohab," 95; and Joukovsky, *People of the Truth*, 215.
94. Loftus, *Travels and Researches in Chaldea and Susiana*, 386.
95. Saranjam, trans. Pittman, in "The Final Word of the Ahl-i Haqq," 152–54; *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 112–14.
96. Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 11.
97. *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 113.
98. *Ibid.*, 12, 113, 117–18; and Saranjam, trans. Pittman, in "The Final Word of the Ahlé-Haqq," 152.
99. *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 115–16.
100. Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 9.
101. *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 115 and Saranjam, trans. Pittman, in "The Final Word of the Ahl-i Haqq," 154.

18—Sultan Sahak: Founder of the Ahl-I Haqq

1. Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 10.
2. See Frédéric Macler's note in Adjarian, "Gyorans et Thoumaris," 297 n. 1, 305; and Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 8, 9, n.1, and 20.

3. Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 8–9.
4. Ibid., 48–49, 51–53.
5. Ibid., 12, 125; Khan, "The Sect of Ahl-i Haqq (Ali Ilahis)," 31, 32, 38–39; Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 24; and al-Azzawi, *al-Kaka'iyya fi al-Tarikh* 41.
6. Adjarian, "Gyorans et Thoumaris," 297.
7. Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 36; Khan, "The Sect of Ahl-i Haqq (Ali Ilahis)," 32; and *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 63.
8. *Tadhkira*, 62–66; Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 121; and *Saranjam*, trans. Pittman, in "The Final Word of the Ahl-i Haqq," 159–60.
9. Khan, "The Sect of Ahl-i Haqq (Ali Ilahis)," 32; and Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 25.
10. *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 124.
11. Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 155.
12. Ibid.
13. Al-Kulayni, *al-Usul min al-Kafi*, 1:181–85. For more information on this subject, see chapter 9 of this book.
14. *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 124. For detailed information about Safi al-Din, his religious guide Zahid of Gilan, and the Safawi Order, see chapter 3 of this book.
15. Ibid., 130–31. Cf. *Shah Nama-ye Haqiqat*, 1:474–79.
16. Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 130–31.
17. For the question of whether Shaykh Safi al-Din was Shiite, see chapter 3 of this book.
18. Hasan Ibn Ali Muhammad al-Tabari, *Kamil-i Baha-i*, 7; and Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 25, 61–62.
19. Khan, "The Sect of Ahl-i Haqq (Ali Ilahis)," 32.
20. *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 144.
21. For more information see Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 57–69.
22. Amir, *Habib al-Siyar*, (1315/1897), 3:220 and 4:421; and al-Shaibi, *al-Fikr al-Shi'i*, 396. Cf. Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 170 n. 20.
23. *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 6, 37, 137, 146, 157, 170 n. 20; and *Shah Nama-ye Haqiqat*, 1:462–65, on Benyamin.
24. Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 12 and *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 167.
25. *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 167–68.
26. Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 13.
27. Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 19.
28. Khan, "The Sect of Ahl-i Haqq (Ali Ilahis)," 39.
29. *Saranjam*, trans. Pittman, in "The Final Word of the Ahl-i Haqq," 155–56; and *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 120.
30. Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 13.
31. *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 122.
32. I personally heard such stories from the Iraqi army commander at the city of Muhammara when I visited the battle front there in March 1981.
33. Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 122.
34. *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 137–38.
35. Ibid., 146. Cf. *Shah Nama-ye Haqiqat*, 1:534–35, on Muhammad Beg.
36. *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, and *Shah Nama-ye Haqiqat*, 536–38.
37. *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow *Truth-Worshippers*, 13 and 168.
38. Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 37.
39. Ibid.

40. Stead, "The Ali Ilahi Sect," 185.
41. Khan, "The Sect of Ahl-i Haqq (Ali Ilahis)," 34.

19—The Ahl-I Haqq: *The Cult of Dawud*

1. Al-Karmali, "al-Dawuda aw al-Dawudiyyun," 60–67. Cf. Stead, "The Ali Ilahi Sect," 186; and Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 37–38.
2. Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 37.
3. Al-Karmali, "al-Dawuda aw al-Dawudiyyun," 61.
4. Stead, "The Ali Ilahi Sect," 185.
5. Ibid., 184; and Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 37, and the anonymous author (C.) whom he quotes.
6. Stead, "The Ali Ilahi Sect," 184.
7. Al-Karmali, "al-Dawuda aw al-Dawudiyyun," 62.
8. Ibid.
9. Louis Cheikho, "Some Moslem Apocryphal Legends," trans. Josephine Spaeth, *The Moslem World* 2 (January 1912): 47–59.
10. S. M. Zwemer, "A Moslem Apocryphal Psalter," *The Moslem World* 5, no. 4 (October 1915): 399–403.
11. Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 57. The Author of *Shah Nama-ye Haqiqat* seems to consider King David and Dawud of the Ahl-i Haqq as two separate persons. See *Shah Nama-ye Haqiqat*, 1:160–63 and 449–62.
12. Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 37–38.
13. See *Shah Nama-ye Haqiqat*, 1:236–39. Al-Majlisi, *Hayat al-Qulub*, 44; Karam, "Sect of the Ali Ilahis," 74–75; Bent, "Azerbaijan," *The Scottish Geographical Magazine* 6 (1890):81–82, where the author writes the name Nusayr as Nazeyr; Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 8; and S. G. Wilson, *Persian Life and Customs*, 239. See also Charles R. Pittman's translation of a version of *Saranjam*, entitled "The Final Word of Ahl-i Haqq," *The Moslem World* 27(1937):161; and Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 2. Southgate states that the common name of the Ali Ilahis is Nesouri. See Southgate, *Narrative of a Tour*, 2:141.
14. *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 124.
15. De Gobineau, *Trois ans en Asie*, 349.
16. Khan, "The Sect of Ahl-i Haqq (Ali Ilahis)," 37.
17. Minorsky, *Notes Sur la Secte des Ahlé-Haqq*, 12; idem, "Ahl-i Hakk," *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden and London: E. J. Brill, 1960) 1:260–62; de Gobineau, *Trois ans en Asie*, 348; and Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 73, 152–53, and 168.
18. H. C. Rawlinson, "Notes on a March from Zohab," 36; S. G. Wilson, *Persian Life and Customs*, 239; and Loftus, *Travels and Research in Chaldea and Susiana*, 386.
19. Stead, "The Ali Ilahi Sect," 184.
20. *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 151 and 168; and idem, "An Ali Ilahi Fragment," 1: 174–75 and 182.
21. Stead, "The Ali Ilahi Sect," 184–85.
22. Southgate, *Narrative of a Tour*, 2:241; and Soane, *To Mesopotamia and Kurdistan in Disguise*, 383.
23. Al-Karmali, "al-Dawuda aw al-Dawudiyyun," 64.
24. *Tadhkira*, in Ivanow, *Truth-Worshippers*, 128.
25. Ibid., 151.
26. Ibid.

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